

7/27/77

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

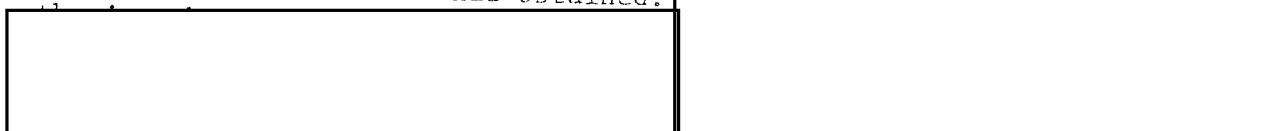
FROM : Senior Review Officer/RRB

SUBJECT : Visit to Historical Office, State Department.

On 26 June, the C/RRB and I met with Dr. Frederick Aandahl, Assistant Chief of the State Department's Historical Office, to discuss the State Department decimal file problem. The meeting was arranged through the good offices of the C/CCS/DDO. Also in attendance at the meeting was Dr. Arthur Kogan, who was responsible for liaison with NARS, and a third staff member.

C/RRB outlined the problem presented by the index cards and distributed examples which RRB had obtained.

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The State Department officers were quite surprised to learn about the problem with the index and recognized the gravity of the matter. None had any positive ideas for resolving the question. They promised that they would give due deliberation to the question but did not appear unduly alarmed. They said that indexes still in State Department custody would be examined to see if similar problems existed but declared that nothing could be done concerning the indexes retired to NARS which were out of their control and open to the public. They believed that some sensitive decimal series could be identified (such as 101, State-CIA relations), but that not all sensitive cards could be located. Screening of the index was discussed but it was admitted that the task would require an enormous amount of time and personnel, which no one had. Dr. Aandahl dismissed the idea of closing the index, since the popularity of the decimal file with researchers was large enough to cause an outcry at NARS.

Dr. Kogan commented that the National Archives staff would identify and withhold CIA material located in the file but conceded that such material was not always readily identified when this fact was pointed out to him by the C/RRB. I pointed out to him that the NARS custodial staff was generally overworked on reference for this file and was neither well informed nor particularly interested in declassification review or intelligence problems and methodology. He also conceded this point. It was also conceded that the declassification unit of NARS might or might not be called upon to review the material. The purpose of CIA

sensitivities rested with the skill of the reviewers. Kogan and the others also admitted that controls on researcher access to the index were loose to non-existent.

It was the view of Dr. Kogan, and apparently Dr. Aandahl, that the problem was too large for solution. He suggested, and Dr. Aandahl seemed to concur, that the problem simply be put aside, due to the sheer bulk of the index and files (which gave the CIA-sensitive documents a measure of protection by concealment) and the fact that most researchers are interested in matters unrelated to the CIA. All conceded that there were researchers who were specifically interested in "uncovering" CIA activities overseas, particularly since several such researchers were known to them and I.

The meeting broke up amid mutual assurances of goodwill but no decisions were made and no positive steps were formulated. Later in the day, in a telephone conversation with Edwin A. Thompson (D/NND/NARS), I learned that Dr. Kogan had called him to propose a meeting of all interested parties at NARS.

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